



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

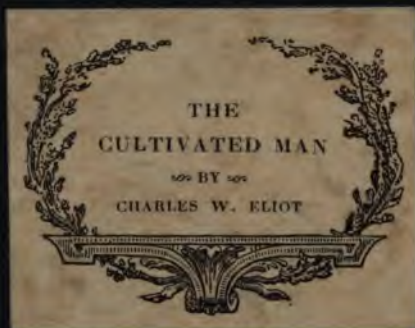
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

PS
1585
C8
c.2
CUB





The Riverside Uplift Series

THE AMATEUR SPIRIT. By BLISS PERRY.

THE GLORY OF THE IMPERFECT. By
GEORGE H. PALMER.

SELF-CULTIVATION IN ENGLISH. By
GEORGE H. PALMER.

TRADES AND PROFESSIONS. By GEORGE
H. PALMER.

THE CULTIVATED MAN. By CHARLES
W. ELIOT.

WHITHER? ANONYMOUS.

CALM YOURSELF. By GEORGE L. WAL-
TON.

Each, 50 cents, net.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK



THE CULTIVATED MAN

BY

CHARLES W. ELIOT



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
MDCCCCXV

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY CHARLES W. ELIOT

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THE CULTIVATED MAN

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY CHARLES W. ELIOT

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THE CULTIVATED MAN

THE CULTIVATED MAN

To produce the cultivated man, or at least the man capable of becoming cultivated in after-life, has long been supposed to be one of the fundamental objects of systematic and thorough education. The ideal of general cultivation has been one of the standards in education. It is often asked: Will the education which a given institution is supplying produce the cultivated man? Or, Can cultivation be the result of a given course of study? In such questions there is an implication that the education which does not produce the cultivated man is a failure, or has been misconceived, or misdirected. Now, if cultivation were an unchanging ideal, the steady use of the conception as a permanent test of educational processes might be justified; but if the cultivated man of to-day is, or ought to be, a distinctly different creature from the cultivated man of a

THE CULTIVATED MAN

century ago, the ideal of cultivation cannot be appealed to as a standard without preliminary explanations and interpretations. It is the object of this paper to show that the idea of cultivation in the highly trained human being has undergone substantial changes during the last century.

I ought to say at once that I propose to use the term "cultivated man" in only its good sense—in Emerson's sense. In this paper, he is not to be a weak, critical, fastidious creature, vain of a little exclusive information or of an uncommon knack in Latin verse or mathematical logic; he is to be a man of quick perceptions, broad sympathies, and wide affinities; responsive, but independent; self-reliant, but deferential; loving truth and candor, but also moderation and proportion; courageous, but gentle; not finished, but perfecting. All authorities agree that true culture is not exclusive, sectarian, or partisan, but the very opposite; that it is not to be attained in solitude, but in society; and that the best atmosphere for culture is that of a school, university, academy, or church, where many pursue together the ideals of truth, righteousness, and love.

THE CULTIVATED MAN

Here someone may think : This process of cultivation is evidently a long, slow, artificial process ; I prefer the genius, the man of native power or skill, the man whose judgment is sound and influence strong, though he cannot read or write — the born inventor, orator, or poet. So do we all. Men have always revered prodigious inborn gifts, and always will. Indeed, barbarous men always say of the possessors of such gifts : These are not men, they are gods. But we teachers who carry on a system of popular education, which is by far the most complex and valuable invention of this century, know that we have to do, not with the highly gifted units, but with the millions who are more or less capable of being cultivated by the long, patient, artificial training called education. For us and our system, the genius is no standard, but the cultivated man is. To his stature we and many of our pupils may in time attain.

There are two principal differences between the present ideal of cultivation and that which prevailed at the beginning of the nineteenth century. All thinkers agree that the horizon of the

THE CULTIVATED MAN

human intellect has widened wonderfully during the past hundred years, and that the scientific method of inquiry, which was known to but very few when the nineteenth century began, has been the means of that widening. This method has become indispensable in all fields of inquiry, including psychology, philanthropy, and religion; and therefore intimate acquaintance with it has become an indispensable element in culture. As Matthew Arnold pointed out more than a generation ago, educated mankind is governed by two passions—one the passion for pure knowledge, the other the passion for being of service or doing good. Now, the passion for pure knowledge is to be gratified only through the scientific method of inquiry. In Arnold's phrases the first step for every aspirant to culture is to endeavor to see things as they are, or "to learn, in short, the will of God." The second step is to make that will prevail, each in his own sphere of action and influence. This recognition of science as pure knowledge, and of the scientific method as the universal method of inquiry, is the great addition made by the nineteenth century to the idea of

THE CULTIVATED MAN

culture. I need not say that within that century what we call science, pure and applied, has transformed the world as the scene of the human drama; and that it is this transformation which has compelled the recognition of natural science as a fundamental necessity in liberal education. The most convinced exponents and advocates of humanism now recognize that science is the "paramount force of the modern, as distinguished from the antique and the mediæval spirit,"¹ and that "an interpenetration of humanism with science, and of science with humanism, is the condition of the highest culture."

A second modification of the earlier idea of cultivation was advocated by Ralph Waldo Emerson more than two generations ago. He taught that the acquisition of some form of manual skill and the practice of some form of manual labor were essential elements of culture. This idea has more and more become accepted in the systematic education of youth; and if we include athletic sports among the desirable forms of manual skill and labor, we may say that during the last

¹ John Addington Symonds, *Culture*.

THE CULTIVATED MAN

thirty years this element of excellence of body in the ideal of education has had a rapid, even an exaggerated, development. The idea of some sort of bodily excellence was, to be sure, not absent in the old conception of the cultivated man. The gentleman could ride well, dance gracefully, and fence with skill. But the modern conception of bodily skill as an element in cultivation is more comprehensive, and includes that habitual contact with the external world which Emerson deemed essential to real culture. We have lately become convinced that accurate work with carpenters' tools, or lathe, or hammer and anvil, or violin, or piano, or pencil, or crayon, or camel's-hair brush, trains well the same nerves and ganglia with which we do what is ordinarily called thinking. We have also become convinced that some intimate, sympathetic acquaintance with the natural objects of the earth and sky adds greatly to the happiness of life, and that this acquaintance should be begun in childhood and be developed all through adolescence and maturity. A brook, a hedgerow, or a garden is an inexhaustible teacher of wonder, reverence, and love.

THE CULTIVATED MAN

The scientists insist to-day on nature study for children ; but we teachers ought long ago to have learned from the poets the value of this element in education. They are the best advocates of nature study. If any are not convinced of its worth, then let them go to Theocritus, Virgil, Wordsworth, Tennyson, or Lowell for the needed demonstration. Let them observe, too, that a great need of modern industrial society is intellectual pleasures, or pleasure which, like music, combines delightful sensations with the gratifications of observation, association, memory, and sympathy. The idea of culture has always included a quick and wide sympathy with men; it should hereafter include sympathy with nature, and particularly with its living forms, a sympathy based on some accurate observation of nature. The bookworm, the monk, the isolated student, has never been the type of the cultivated man. Society has seemed the natural setting for the cultivated person, man or woman; but the present conception of real culture contains not only a large development of this social element, but also an extension of interest and reverence to the animated

THE CULTIVATED MAN

creation and to those immense forces that set the earthly stage for man and all related beings.

Let us now proceed to examine some of the changes in the idea of culture, or in the available means of culture, which the last hundred years have brought about.

I. The moral sense of the modern world makes character a more important element than it used to be in the ideal of a cultivated man. Now, character is formed, as Goethe said, in the "stream of the world"—not in stillness or isolation, but in the quick-flowing tides of the busy world, the world of nature and the world of mankind. At the end of the nineteenth century the world was wonderfully different from the world at the beginning of that eventful period; and, moreover, men's means of making acquaintance with the world were vastly ampler than they were a hundred years earlier. To the old idea of culture some knowledge of history was indispensable. Now, history is a representation of the stream of the world, or of some little portion of that stream, one hundred, five hundred, two thousand years ago. Acquaintance with some part of the present stream ought

THE CULTIVATED MAN

to be more formative of character, and more instructive as regards external nature and the nature of man, than any partial survey of the stream that was flowing centuries ago. We have, then, through the present means of reporting the stream of the world from day to day, material for culture such as no preceding generation of men has possessed. The cultivated man or woman must use the means which steam and electricity have provided for reporting the play of physical forces and of human volitions which make the world of to-day; for the world of to-day supplies in its immense variety a picture of all stages of human progress, from the stone age, through savagery, barbarism, and mediævalism, to what we now call civilization. The rising generation should think hard, and feel keenly, just where the men and women who constitute the actual human world are thinking and feeling most to-day. The panorama of to-day's events is not an accurate or complete picture, for history will supply posterity with much evidence which is hidden from the eyes of contemporaries; but it is nevertheless an invaluable and a new means of developing good

THE CULTIVATED MAN

judgment, good feeling, and the passion for social service ; or, in other words, of securing cultivation. But someone will say : The stream of the world is foul. True in part. The stream is, what it has been, a mixture of foulness and purity, of meanness and majesty ; but it has nourished individual virtue and race civilization. Literature and history are a similar mixture, and yet are the traditional means of culture. Are not the Greek tragedies means of culture ? Yet they are full of incest, murder, and human sacrifices to lustful and revengeful gods.

II. A cultivated man should express himself by tongue or pen with some accuracy and elegance ; therefore, linguistic training has had great importance in the idea of cultivation. The conditions of the educated world have, however, changed so profoundly since the revival of learning in Italy that our inherited ideas concerning training in language and literature have required large modifications. In the year 1400, it might have been said with truth that there was but one language of scholars, the Latin, and but two great literatures, the Hebrew and the Greek. Since that

THE CULTIVATED MAN

time, however, other great literatures have arisen, the Italian, Spanish, French, German, and above all the English, which has become incomparably the most extensive and various and the noblest of literatures. Under these circumstances it is impossible to maintain that a knowledge of any particular literature is indispensable to culture. Yet we cannot but feel that the cultivated man ought to possess a considerable acquaintance with the literature of some great language, and the power to use the native language in a pure and interesting way. Thus, we are not sure that Robert Burns could be properly described as a cultivated man, moving poet though he was. We do not think of Abraham Lincoln as a cultivated man, master of English speech and writing though he was. These men do not correspond to the type represented by the word "cultivated," but belong in the class of geniuses. When we ask ourselves why a knowledge of literature seems indispensable to the ordinary idea of cultivation, we find no answer except this, that in literature are portrayed all human passions, desires, and aspirations, and that acquaintance with

THE CULTIVATED MAN

these human feelings, and with the means of portraying them, seems to us essential to culture. These human qualities and powers are also the commonest ground of interesting human intercourse, and therefore literary knowledge exalts the quality and enhances the enjoyment of human intercourse. It is in conversation that cultivation tells as much as anywhere, and this rapid exchange of thoughts is by far the commonest manifestation of its power. Combine the knowledge of literature with knowledge of the "stream of the world," and you have united two large sources of the influence of the cultivated person. The linguistic and literary element in cultivation therefore abides, but has become vastly broader than formerly; so broad, indeed, that selection among its various fields is forced upon every educated youth.

III. The next great element in cultivation to which I ask your attention is acquaintance with some part of the store of knowledge which humanity in its progress from barbarism has acquired and laid up. This is the prodigious store of recorded, rationalized, and systematized dis-

THE CULTIVATED MAN

coveries, experiences, and ideas. This is the store which we teachers try to pass on to the rising generation. The capacity to assimilate this store and improve it in each successive generation is the distinction of the human race over other animals. It is too vast for any man to master, though he had a hundred lives instead of one ; and its growth in the nineteenth century was greater than in all the thirty preceding centuries put together. In the eighteenth century a diligent student, with quick powers of apprehension and strong memory, need not have despaired of mastering a large fraction of this store of knowledge. Long before the end of the nineteenth century such a task had become impossible. Culture, therefore, can no longer imply a knowledge of everything — not even a little knowledge of everything. It must be content with general knowledge of some things, and a real mastery of some small portion of the human store. Here is a profound modification of the idea of cultivation which the nineteenth century has brought about. What portion or portions of the infinite human store are most proper to the cultivated man ? The

THE CULTIVATED MAN

answer must be: Those which enable him, with his individual personal qualities, to deal best and sympathize most with nature and with other human beings. It is here that the passion for service must fuse with the passion for knowledge. It is natural to imagine that the young man who has acquainted himself with economics, the science of government, sociology, and the history of civilization in its motives, objects, and methods, has a better chance of fusing the passion for knowledge with the passion for doing good than the man whose passion for pure knowledge leads him to the study of chemical or physical phenomena, or of the habits and climatic distribution of plants or animals. Yet, so intricate are the relations of human beings to the animate and inanimate creation that it is impossible to foresee with what realms of nature intense human interests may prove to be identified. Thus the generation now on the stage has suddenly learned that some of the most sensitive and exquisite human interests, such as health or disease, and life or death for those we love, are bound up with the life-histories of parasites on the blood corpuscles or of cer-

THE CULTIVATED MAN

tain varieties of mosquitoes and ticks. When the spectra of the sun, stars, and other lights began to be studied, there was not the slightest anticipation that a cure for one of the most horrible diseases to which mankind is liable might be found in the X-rays. While, then, we can still see that certain subjects afford more obvious or frequent access to means of doing good and to fortunate intercourse with our fellows than other subjects, we have learned that there is no field of real knowledge which may not suddenly prove contributory in a high degree to human happiness and the progress of civilization, and therefore acceptable as a worthy element in the truest culture.

IV. The only other element in cultivation, which time will permit me to treat is the training of the constructive imagination. The imagination is the greatest of human powers, no matter in what field it works—in art or literature, in mechanical invention, in science, government, commerce, or religion; and the training of the imagination is, therefore, far the most important part of education. I use the term “constructive

THE CULTIVATED MAN

imagination " because that implies the creation or building of a new thing. The sculptor, for example, imagines or conceives the perfect form of a child ten years of age. He has never seen such a thing, for a child perfect in form is never produced ; he has only seen in different children the elements of perfection, here one element and there another. In his imagination he combines these elements of the perfect form, which he has only seen separated, and from this picture in his mind he carves the stone, and in the execution invariably loses his ideal — that is, falls short of it, or fails to express it. Sir Joshua Reynolds points out that the painter can picture only what he has somewhere seen ; but that the more he has seen and noted, the surer he is to be original in his painting, because his imaginary combinations will be original. Constructive imagination is the great power of the poet as well as of the artist ; and the nineteenth century has convinced us that it is also the great power of the man of science, the investigator, and the natural philosopher. What gives every great naturalist or physicist his epoch-making results is precisely

THE CULTIVATED MAN

the imaginative power by which he deduces from masses of fact the guiding hypothesis or principle.

The educated world needs to recognize the new varieties of constructive imagination. Dante gave painful years to picturing on many pages of his immortal comedy of hell, purgatory, and paradise the most horrible monsters and tortures, and the most loathsome and noisome abominations, that his fervid imagination could concoct out of his own bitter experiences and the manners and customs of his cruel times. Sir Charles Lyell spent many laborious years in searching for and putting together the scattered evidences that the geological processes by which the crust of the earth has been made ready for the use of man have been, in the main, not catastrophic, but gradual and gentle; and that the forces which have been in action through past ages are, for the most part, similar to those we may see to-day eroding hills, cutting cañons, making placers, marshes, and meadows, and forming prairies and ocean floors. He first imagined, and then demonstrated, that the geologic agencies are not ex-

THE CULTIVATED MAN

plosive and cataclysmal, but steady and patient. These two kinds of imagination — Dante's and Lyell's — are not comparable, but both are manifestations of great human power. Zola in *La Bête humaine* contrives that ten persons, all connected with the railroad from Paris to Havre, shall be either murderers or murdered, or both, within eighteen months; and he adds two railroad slaughters criminally procured. The conditions of time and place are ingeniously imagined, and no detail is omitted which can heighten the effect of this homicidal fiction. Contrast this kind of constructive imagination with the kind which conceived the great wells sunk in the solid rock below Niagara that contain the turbines, that drive the dynamos, that generate the electric force that turns thousands of wheels and lights thousands of lamps over hundreds of square miles of adjoining territory; or with the kind which conceives the sending of human thoughts across three thousand miles of stormy sea instantaneously, on nothing more substantial than ethereal waves. There is no crime, cruelty, or lust about these last two sorts of imagining. No lurid fire of hell

THE CULTIVATED MAN

or human passion illumines their scenes. They are calm, accurate, just, and responsible; and nothing but beneficence and increased human well-being results from them. There is room in the hearts of twentieth-century men for a high admiration of these kinds of imagination, as well as for that of the poet, artist, or dramatist.

Another kind of imagination deserves a moment's consideration — the receptive imagination which entertains and holds fast the visions genius creates or the analogies of nature suggest. A young woman is absorbed for hours in conning the squalid scenes and situations through which Thackeray portrays the malign motives and unclean soul of Becky Sharp. Another young woman watches for days the pairing, nesting, brooding, and foraging of two robins that have established home and family in the notch of a maple near her window. She notes the unselfish labors of the father and mother for each other and for their little ones, and weaves into the simple drama all sorts of protective instincts and human affections. Here are two employments for the receptive imagination. Shall systematic edu-

THE CULTIVATED MAN

cation compel the first, but make no room for the second? The increasing attention to nature study suggests the hope that the imaginative study of human ills and woes is not to be allowed to exclude the imaginative study of nature, and that both studies may count toward culture.

It is one lesson of the nineteenth century, then, that in every field of human knowledge the constructive imagination finds play — in literature, in history, in theology, in anthropology, and in the whole field of physical and biological research. That great century has taught us that, on the whole, the scientific imagination is quite as productive for human service as the literary or poetic imagination. The imagination of Darwin or Pasteur, for example, is as high and productive a form of imagination as that of Dante, or Goethe, or even Shakespeare, if we regard the human uses which result from the exercise of imaginative powers, and mean by human uses not merely meat and drink, clothes and shelter, but also the satisfaction of mental and spiritual needs. We must, therefore, allow in our contemplation of the cultivated man a large expan-

THE CULTIVATED MAN

sion of the fields in which the cultivated imagination may be exercised. We must extend our training of the imagination beyond literature and the fine arts, to history, philosophy, science, government, and sociology. We must recognize the prodigious variety of fruits of the imagination that the last century has given to our race.

It results from this brief survey that the elements and means of cultivation are much more numerous than they used to be ; so that it is not wise to say of any one acquisition or faculty : With it cultivation becomes possible ; without it, impossible. The one acquisition or faculty may be immense, and yet cultivation may not have been attained. Thus, it is obvious that a man may have a wide acquaintance with music, and possess great musical skill and that wonderful imaginative power which conceives delicious melodies and harmonies for the delight of mankind through centuries, and yet not be a cultivated man in the ordinary acceptance of the words. We have met artists who were rude and uncouth, yet possessed a high degree of technical skill and strong powers of imagination. We have

THE CULTIVATED MAN

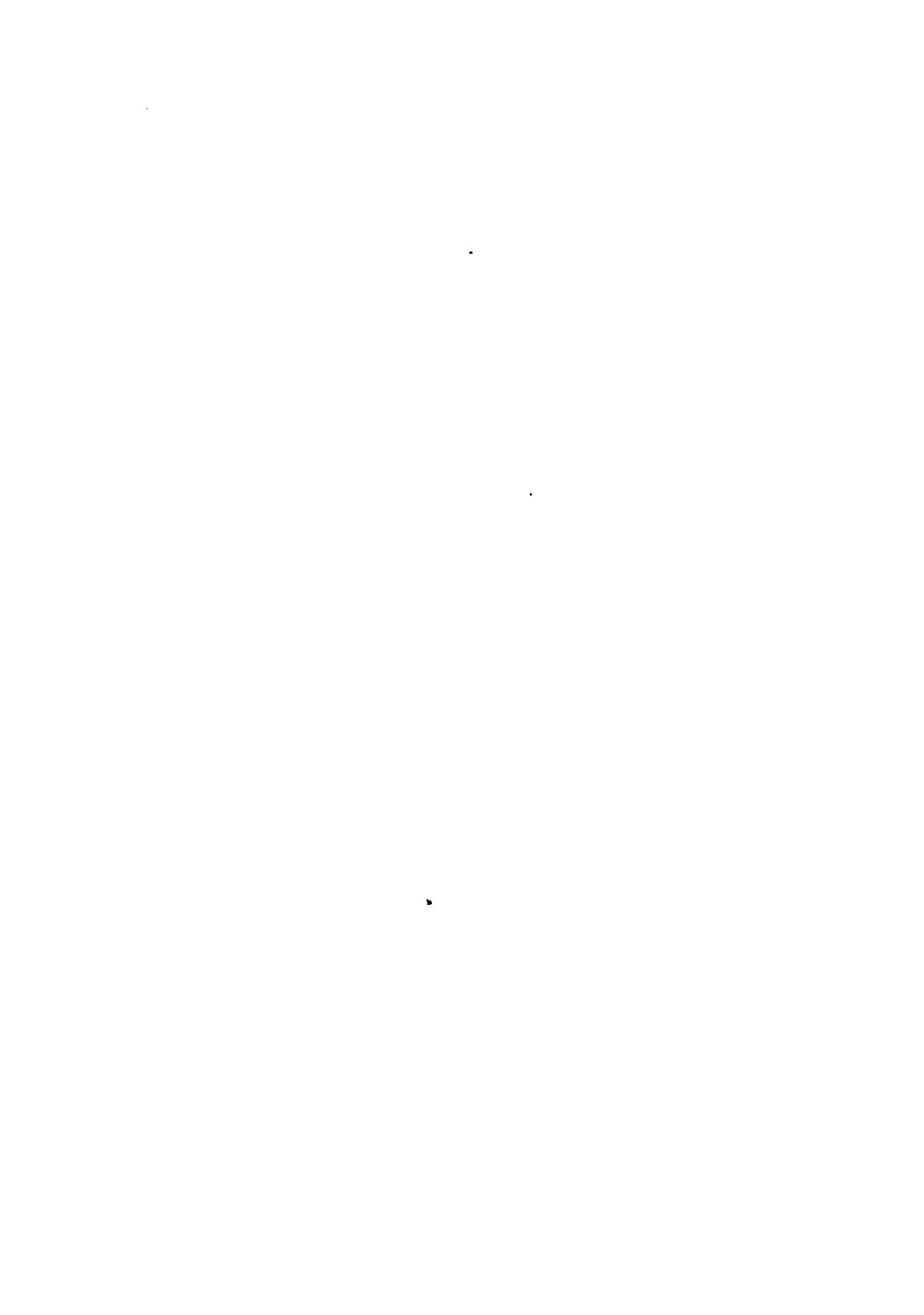
seen philanthropists and statesmen whose minds have played on great causes and great affairs, and yet who lacked a correct use of their native language, and had no historical perspective or background of historical knowledge. On the other hand, is there any single acquisition or faculty which is essential to culture, except, indeed, a reasonably accurate and refined use of the mother-tongue? Again, though we can discern in different individuals different elements of the perfect type of cultivated man, we seldom find combined in any human being all the elements of the type. Here, as in painting or sculpture, we make up our ideal from traits picked out from many imperfect individuals and put together. We must not, therefore, expect systematic education to produce multitudes of highly cultivated and symmetrically developed persons; the multitudinous product will always be imperfect, just as there are no perfect trees, animals, flowers, or crystals.

It has been my object to point out that our conception of the type of cultivated man has been greatly enlarged, and on the whole exalted,

THE CULTIVATED MAN

by observation of the experiences of mankind during the last hundred years. Let us as teachers accept no single element or kind of culture as the one essential ; let us remember that the best fruits of real culture are an open mind, broad sympathies, and respect for all the diverse achievements of the human intellect at whatever stage of development they may actually be — the stage of fresh discovery, or bold exploration, or complete conquest. Let us remember that the moral elements of the new education are individual choice of studies and career among a great, new variety of studies and careers, early responsibility accompanying this freedom of choice, love of truth, now that truth may be directly sought through rational inquiry, and an omnipresent sense of social obligation. These moral elements are so strong that the new forms of culture are likely to prove themselves quite as productive of morality, high-mindedness, and idealism as the old.

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A



BASEMENT

GUBBERLEY LIB.

PS 1585 .C8

C.2

The cultivated man.

Stanford University Libraries



3 6105 033 046 009

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004

